

Remarks

Claims 1 to 16 are pending. Claims 3 and 11 have been canceled. Claims 1, 7, and 10 are currently amended. Claims 17 to 23 have been added.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 12-16 are allowed and that claims 3, 5 to 7, and 10 are objected to but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

§ 112 Rejections

Claim 11 stand rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants have cancelled this claim, rendering the rejection moot.

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, and 11 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishimura (US 4,367,318) in view of JP2000273282. Applicants have amended the claims rendering this rejection moot.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Allowance of claims 1, 2, 4-10, 12-23, as amended, at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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